(ii) Making good the production loss under the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS).

(iii) Many measures are in existence to mitigate distress of calamity affected farmers through interest relief and rescheduling of loans etc.

Keeping the above in view there is no proposal to consider institution of a separate Welfare Fund for farmers.

Caterpillar menace in MP

†1273. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the action being taken by Government regarding the use of advanced techniques in agricultural sector;

(b) whether Madhya Pradesh has always faced the problem of caterpillars and if so, what steps have been taken by Government in order to protect the crop of soyabean from the menace of caterpillars; and

(c) the kind of cooperation assured by the Central Government to the State Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) Government is propagating Integrated Pest Management (IPM), encompassing cultural, mechanical and biological methods and need based use of chemical pesticides, as the cardinal principle and main plank of plant protection through Farmers' Field Schools.

(b) and (c) During the past few years, the soyabean crop in Madhya Pradesh has been infested by caterpillars due to conducive weather conditions. The State Government was advised to adopt appropriate remedial measures including IPM and to utilize funds allocated under the Integrated Scheme for Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize (ISOPOM) and Macro Management Scheme for controlling the pest. The State Government was also advised to avail technical support, if required, from the National Research Centre on Soyabean, Indore and the Central Integrated Pest Management Centre, Indore.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.